

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1. (Withdrawn) A process for operating a machine of the tobacco processing industry that includes a wrapping material strip supply and a garniture device, in which a conveyor path is defined between the wrapping material strip supply and the garniture device, said process comprising:
 - suctioning at least one wrapping material strip that is provided for wrapping a material into a suction channel that branches off from the conveyor path;
 - fixing the at least one wrapping material strip in at least one predetermined position along the conveyor path; and
 - conveying the at least one wrapping material strip along the conveyor path from the at least one predetermined position.
2. (Withdrawn) The process in accordance with claim 1, wherein the material comprises one of a rod of smokeable material or filter material.
3. (Withdrawn) The process in accordance with claim 1, further comprising tearing the at least one wrapping material strip shortly before the suction channel.
4. (Withdrawn) The process in accordance with claim 3, wherein compressed air is utilized to effect the tearing.
5. (Withdrawn) The process in accordance with claim 3, wherein the tearing is performed while the at least one wrapping material strip is fixed in the at least one predetermined position.

6. (Withdrawn) The process in accordance with claim 5, wherein after the tearing, the at least one wrapping material strip is released from the at least one predetermined position to be conveyed along the conveyor path.

7. (Withdrawn) The process in accordance with claim 5, wherein after the tearing, the at least one wrapping material strip is conveyed to the garniture device.

8. (Withdrawn) The process in accordance with claim 1, further comprising cutting the at least one wrapping material strip.

9. (Withdrawn) The process in accordance with claim 8, wherein, after the cutting, a portion of the at least one wrapping material strip that is not being fixed is suctioned into the suction channel.

10. (Withdrawn) The process in accordance with claim 1, further comprises stopping the suctioning into the suction channel.

11. (Withdrawn) The process in accordance with claim 10, wherein the suctioning is stopped by closing the suction channel with an air curtain.

12. (Withdrawn) The process in accordance with claim 1, further comprising conveying the at least one wrapping material strip to the garniture device.

13. (Currently amended) A device for feeding at least one wrapping material strip, comprising:

a feed element structured and arranged to feed the at least one wrapping material strip guided along a conveyor path to a material;

a severing element structured and arranged to sever the at least one wrapping material strip;

a fixing element structured and arranged to fix one end of the severed wrapping material strip; and

a suction channel structured and arranged to branch off from said conveyor path and to suction off the at least one wrapping material strip.

14. (Original) The device in accordance with claim 13, wherein the conveyor path extends from a wrapping material strip supply to said feed element.

15. (Original) The device in accordance with claim 13, wherein the material comprises a rod of smokeable material or filter material of the tobacco processing industry.

16. (Original) The device in accordance with claim 13, further comprising at least one first air nozzle provided in said suction channel.

17. (Original) The device in accordance with claim 13, further comprising at least one second severing element.

18. (Original) The device in accordance with claim 17, wherein said at least one second severing element comprises at least one second air nozzle.

19. (Original) The device in accordance with claim 13, further comprising at least one third air nozzle structured and arranged to produce an air curtain.

20. (Original) The device in accordance with claim 13, wherein said at least one wrapping material strip comprises a plurality of wrapping material strips, and for each wrapping material strip, at least one of: a first air nozzle positioned in said suction channel, a third air nozzle structured for producing an air curtain, a first severing element formed by a cutting device and a second severing element formed by a second air nozzle is provided.

21. (Original) The device in accordance with claim 13, wherein said fixing element is contained in said severing element

22. (Original) The device in accordance with claim 13, wherein said fixing element is arranged upstream of said severing element in relation to a wrapping material strip travel direction.

23. (Original) A rod maker comprising at least one feed device in accordance with claim 13.

24. (Original) The rod maker in accordance with claim 23, structured and arranged as a rod maker

25. (Original) The rod maker in accordance with claim 23, structured and arranged as a cigarette rod maker.

26. (Currently amended) An apparatus for feeding at least one wrapping material strip from a wrapping material strip supply to a feeding device, comprising:

a conveyor path defined between the wrapping strip material supply and the feeding device;

a suction channel positioned to branch off from said conveyor path and to suction off the at least one wrapping material strip;

at least one severing element structured and arranged along the conveyor path; and

a fixing element structured and arranged to positionally fix the at least one wrapping material strip along the conveyor path.

27. (Original) The apparatus in accordance with claim 26, wherein said fixing element is positioned upstream of said suction channel in relation to a wrapping material strip travel direction.

28. (Original) The apparatus in accordance with claim 27, further comprising at least one first air nozzle structured and arranged to guide the wrapping material strip along the conveyor path.

29. (Original) The apparatus in accordance with claim 28, wherein said at least one severing element comprises at least one second air nozzle positioned across said conveyor path from said suction channel.

30. (Original) The apparatus in accordance with claim 29, wherein said suction channel comprises at least one third air nozzle structured and arranged to suction said conveyor path.

31. (Original) The apparatus in accordance with claim 30, further comprising at least one fourth air nozzle arranged at a junction of said conveyor path and said suction channel, said at least one fourth air nozzle being structured and arranged to create an air curtain to close off said suction channel.